

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NOUAKC 01036 271220Z

64

ACTION SCS-03

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FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1654

INFO AMEMBASSY DAKAR

UNCLAS NOUAKCHOTT 1036

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC

SUBJ: WHEREABOUTS AM CIT CATHERINE ANNE BOTELHO

1. OCT 25 RECEIVED TELEX REQUEST AP PARIS OF WHEREABOUTS CATHERINE ANN BOTELHO AND SPECIFICALLY TO CONFIRM IF SHE "TAKEN PRISONER" IN MAURITANIA. PASSED FOLLOWING TO AP BUREAU:

2. QUOTE, IN LATE SEPTEMBER DALE DAVID DOREN ARRIVED AT THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN NOUAKCHOTT MAURITANIA REQUESTING EMBASSY ASSISTANCE FOR HIMSELF AND HIS TRAVELING COMPANIONS CATHERINE ANN BOTELHO, MICHAEL VISLOCKY AND THERESA ANNE DILLON. DOREN TOLD THE EMBASSY CONSULAR OFFICER THAT HE AND HIS FRIENDS HAD BEEN IN MAURITANIA AS TOURISTS SINCE MAY, SPENDING THE MAJORITY OF THEIR TIME IN THE NORTHERN MAURITANIAN TOWN OF ZOUERATE. HE SAID THAT THEY WERE ON THEIR WAY TO SENEGAL BUT THAT MAURITANIAN CUSTOMS OFFICIALS IN AKJOUJT HAD PREVENTED THEIR CONTINUING THEIR TRAVELS BECAUSE:

A. THEIR VISAS HAD EXPIRED, B. THEY HAD NO CUSTOMS CLEARANCES FOR THE THREE AUTOMOBILES THEY WERE DRIVING, C. THEY HAD NOT DECLARED THE AMOUNT OF FOREIGN CURRENCY IN THEIR POSSESSION PRIOR TO ENTERING MAURITANIA. DOREN DID NOT REPORT THAT THEY HAD BEEN "TAKEN PRISONER" OR JAILED AND, IN FACT, THE MAURITANIAN AUTHORITIES HAD ALLOWED DOREN TO TRAVEL TO NOUAKCHOTT TO CONSULT WITH THE EMBASSY. UNTIL THE EMBASSY ARRANGED FOR THEIR CLEARANCES BY MAURITANIAN CUSTOMS AND IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES DOREN SAID THE GROUP LIVED IN THEIR VEHICLES WHICH WERE PARKED IN FRONT OF THE CUSTOMS OFFICES IN AKJOUJT. ON OCT 1

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MISS BOTELHO AND HER FRIENDS TOLD EMBASSY OFFICERS THAT THEY WERE

DEPARTING NOUAKCHOTT AND DRIVING DIRECTLY FOR SENEGAL. SINCE THAT TIME WE HAVE RECEIVED NO FURTHER WORD OF THEIR WHEREABOUTS. UNQUOTE.

3. WE UNAWARE REASON FOR AP INTEREST THIS CASE. WHEN DOREN ARRIVED AT EMBASSY WITH NEWS OF HIS AND HIS FRIENDS WEEK LONG DETENTION AMBASSADOR TOOK UP WITH ACTING FORMIN ASKING WHY EMBASSY NOT INFORMED OF THESE AMERICANS IN DIFFICULTY AND REQUESTING MINISTRY INSURE THERE NO REPETITION. ONCE DOREN APPEARED AT EMBASSY WE ABLE ARRANGE CLEARANCE THEIR ONWARD TRAVEL WITHIN THREE DAYS. IN RESPONSE TO OM FROM DAKAR SEEKING WHEREABOUTS DOREN AND BOTELHO WE WRITING LETTERS TO THEIR ANXIOUS PARENTS.MURPHY

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